

REMARKS

This paper is responsive to any paper(s) indicated above, and is responsive in any other manner indicated below.

PENDING CLAIMS

Claims 1, 5, 7, 8, 12, 13, 16, 19, 23, 24 and 29-32 were pending, under consideration and subjected to examination in the Office Action. Such changes are unrelated to any prior art or scope adjustment and are simply cancellation of disputed claims (without prejudice or disclaimer) to obtain a patent (without prejudice or disclaimer) on ones of the allowable claims as quickly as possible. The disputed claims may be pursued within a continuing application. At entry of this paper, Claims 1, 5, 7, 8, 12, 13, 16, 19 and 30-32 will be pending for further consideration and examination in the application.

ALLOWED CLAIMS

Claims 1, 5, 7, 8, 12, 13, 16, 19 and 30-32 have been allowed in the application, as indicated within the section number "3" on page 2 of the Office Action. Applicant and the undersigned respectfully thank the Examiner for such indication of allowable subject matter.

REJECTION UNDER 35 USC '103 - OBSOLETE VIA CLAIM CANCELLATION

The 35 USC '103 rejection of claims 23-24 and 29 as being unpatentable over Takagi et al. (U.S. Patent 5,801,965) in view of Matsuo (JP 11-176899) is respectfully traversed, but the present cancellation of such claims (without prejudice or disclaimer) to obtain a patent (without prejudice or disclaimer) on ones of the

allowable claims as quickly as possible, has rendered such rejection(s) obsolete, and thus gratuitous traversal arguments concerning the rejection(s) are omitted for brevity. Further discussions/arguments concerning such rejection(s) are left for the future if/when appropriate. Based upon the following, reconsideration and withdrawal of such rejection(s) are respectfully requested.

The above statements, or any present cancellation of claims (without prejudice or disclaimer), should not be taken as an indication or admission that the rejection was valid, or as a disclaimer of any scope or subject matter, but is merely use of a procedural approach to obtain a patent (without prejudice or disclaimer) on ones of the allowable claims as quickly as possible.

ALL CLAIMS IN CONDITION FOR ALLOWANCE

In view of the fact that all prior art rejected claims have now been canceled without prejudice or disclaimer, and in view of the fact that all remaining claims have already allowed, it is respectfully submitted that all presently pending claims are now in condition for allowance. A Notice of Allowance with respect to the present application is respectfully requested.

EXAMINER INVITED TO TELEPHONE

The Examiner is herein invited to telephone the undersigned attorneys at the local Washington, D.C. area telephone number of 703/312-6600 for discussing any Examiner's Amendments or other suggested actions for accelerating prosecution and moving the present application to allowance.

RESERVATION OF RIGHTS

It is respectfully submitted that any and all claim amendments and/or cancellations submitted within this paper and throughout prosecution of the present application are without prejudice or disclaimer. That is, any above statements, or any present amendment or cancellation of claims (all made without prejudice or disclaimer), should not be taken as an indication or admission that any objection/rejection was valid, or as a disclaimer of any scope or subject matter. Applicant respectfully reserves all rights to file subsequent related application(s) (including reissue applications) directed to any/all previously claimed limitations/features which have been subsequently amended or cancelled, or to any/all limitations/features not yet claimed, i.e., Applicant continues (indefinitely) to maintain no intention or desire to dedicate or surrender any limitations/features of subject matter of the present application to the public.

CONCLUSION

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, Applicant respectfully submits that the claims listed above as presently being under consideration in the application are now in condition for allowance. Accordingly, early allowance of such claims is respectfully requested.

To the extent necessary, Applicants petition for an extension of time under 37 CFR §1.136. Please charge any shortage of fees due in connection with the filing of

this paper, including extension of time fees, to the Deposit Account of Antonelli,
Terry, Stout & Kraus, No. 01-2135 (Application No. 501.39619X00), and please
credit any excess fees to said deposit account.

Respectfully submitted,

ANTONELLI, TERRY, STOUT & KRAUS, LLP



Paul J. Skwierawski
Registration No. 32,173

1300 North Seventeenth Street
Suite 1800
Arlington, Virginia 22209
Tel.: (703) 312-6600
Fax: (703) 312-6666

PJS/slk